



YS NEWS

Focus: Thrive by Five, *part 4*

This feature will focus on learning and reading development for different age groups, beginning with birth to five from January to June, 2012, and eventually going through age 19.

To continue with the focus on Thrive by Five—research on learning and reading development for children ages birth through 5 and how libraries can best serve them and their parents—this article will take a look at the brain research behind early literacy.

Brain Research for 0–5 Year Olds

It's been said that the first years of life always last—and research backs that up. Technology like MRIs and other brain scans now allow researchers to see what's going on in children's brains, revealing how children learn during their earliest years.

Brains are built from the bottom up. Babies are born with 100 billion neurons that are not connected. In the first few years of life, 700 new neural connections are formed every *second*. Sensory experiences stimulate these connections, which are electrical impulses. Development of these electrical impulses across synapses (gaps between brain cells) is the basis for children's learning.

After this rapid increase, connections are reduced through a process called pruning, so that brain circuits become more efficient. Circuits for the senses, like those for basic vision and hearing, are the first to

develop, followed by early language skills and higher cognitive functions.

Connections are made and pruned in a set order, with later, more complex brain circuits built upon earlier, simpler ones.

Repetition is a key factor in maintaining synapses. The synapses used repeatedly are the ones that are kept, and those little used get pruned.

Emotions also help shape neural connections by releasing chemicals that help fix memories. High levels of stress over long periods inhibit connections needed for learning. Such stress can be caused by extreme poverty, repeated abuse, or severe maternal depression, for example.

The brain is most flexible early in life. As the maturing brain becomes more specialized to assume more complex functions, it is less capable of reorganizing and adapting to new challenges. For instance, by age 1, the parts of the brain that differentiate sound are becoming specialized to the language the baby has been exposed to. At the same time,

Welcome to the fourth issue of YS News!

This newsletter will feature articles on learning development, summer reading updates, timely tidbits, children's and teen literature news, and an exchange of what's going on in CO libraries.

Would you like to see a topic covered in the newsletter? Want to share info about your programs? Or perhaps contribute an article? Let me know!

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Summer Reading 2012: News & Ideas

So much is happening in SRP news! There will be **lots** more news coming soon!



Great New SRP Resources!

Check out these new, free online resources that support the 2012 Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP) bibliographies in the SRP manual:

- For children's CSLP resources, go to: TeachingBooks.net/CSLP
- For early literacy CSLP resources, go to: TeachingBooks.net/CSLPEL
- For teen CSLP resources, go to: TeachingBooks.net/CSLPT

The materials include...

- Links to author and illustrator websites
- Audio recordings of authors pronouncing and telling stories about their names
- Book discussion and activity guides
- Audio booktalks with authors, illustrators, and professional narrators
- Meet-the-Author Movie and Audio Interviews

Use these children's and YA book materials for...

- Staff Development. Learn more about featured authors and books.
- Programming. Integrate ready-to-use activities and audio book talks to round out your programs.
- Book Groups. Stimulate conversation with book guides and novel units.
- Technology Integration. Enable patrons and staff to listen online to brief performances of books, watch authors in their studios, and access authoritative Web-based material about the featured books and authors.

These online resources are brought to you by Upstart, in partnership with TeachingBooks.net and the CSLP. Questions? Contact Nick Glass, founder of TeachingBooks.net, at nick@TeachingBooks.net, (800) 596-0710.

CO Blue Spruce Award



Encourage your teens to read vote for books for the CO Blue Spruce Award during your SRP!

Tweens and teens (grades 6–12) are eligible to nominate books for the award. They must read 3 of the nominated books (which can count toward their SRP reading) and vote on their favorite. They can also nominate books for the 2014 awards. Library staff and teachers collect ballots and turn them in by Jan. 18, 2013. Find more [info and ballots here](#).

Teachers and Summer Reading

Read about how some teachers view and promote summer reading to their students in [this article](#).

Teen Book Awards and Summer Reading

Keep teens reading all summer with YALSA's [2012 Teens' Top Ten nominees](#). Teens read through August then vote for their favorites online. YALSA will announce the winners during Teen Read Week, Oct. 14 – 20. To learn more about Teen Read Week, or to register, visit www.ala.org/teenread. The theme for 2012 is "It Came from the Library!"

2012 SRP Fonts

You can download the fonts used in the early literacy, children's, teen, and adult artwork when you are logged in to the cslpreads.org website. However, the children's font Uncle Stinky is no longer accessible. If you would like this font contact Karen Yother and she will email it to you. karen@communitylibrary.net

Book Nook

CO Book Awards—June 22

The 2012 Colorado Book Awards will be announced Friday, June 22, at 1 pm at the Doerr-Hosier Center at the Aspen Meadows in Aspen. Sponsored by the CO Humanities Council, the awards are given in 12 categories, including Children's Picture Book, Juvenile Literature, and YA Lit. [Learn more here.](#)

Digital World and Children's Books

Wondering how the digital world is impacting children's books? Join the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators for a [one-day symposium](#) on this very topic.

"Once upon a Tablet: Children's Books in a Digital Age": A One-Day Symposium
June 2, 9:00 – 5:00
Colorado School of Mines, Golden, CO

The Rise of E-Reading

A new Pew Research Center study shows a rapid rise in Americans reading e-books. However, Americans strongly prefer print over e-books when it comes to reading with a child (81% favor print). Read the [report here.](#)

Timely Tidbits

One Book 4 Colorado a Success!

Thanks to your amazing work, One Book 4 CO was a great success! We'll send out a survey to you in early May to find out more info, and then will report the collective results to you. There's interest in doing the project again in the future and your feedback will help us improve it should it continue. Thank you for a great project!



Lt. Governor Joe Garcia and Maybe a Bear Ate It! author Robie H. Harris are good sports in their jammies at the pajama story time at the Children's Museum in Denver, April 23.

Congratulations to StoryBlocks!

StoryBlocks, a project of CLEL (CO Libraries for Early Literacy), won the [Baby Talk award](#) from Westword Magazine!

If you haven't visited [StoryBlocks](#), it's an excellent resource! It's a collection of 30–60 second videos designed to model to parents, caregivers, and library staff some songs, rhymes, and fingerplays appropriate for early childhood. Each video clip includes helpful early literacy tips to increase understanding of child development and pre-literacy needs.

May is Zombie Awareness Month

Yes, yes it really is. According to the Zombie Awareness Society, the founders of this event, "Supporters of Zombie Awareness Month wear a gray ribbon to signify the undead shadows that lurk behind our modern light of day. From May 1 through May 31, concerned citizens take this small step to acknowledge the coming danger." So shouldn't this awareness be highlighted in October? Learn why it's in May instead [here.](#) The Loveland Public Library is celebrating Zombie Awareness Month with their teens by making Zombie Felties. [Check out the fun!](#)

Other May Celebrations

May is also:

- Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month

Timely Tidbits cont.

- Jewish American Heritage Month
- National Inventors' Month
- Mental Health Awareness Month
- Healthy Vision Month
- Get Caught Reading Month

History Colorado Center Opens

Congratulations to the excellent new History Colorado Center! It opened in downtown Denver on April 28. Stop in if you'll be in the metro area, or check out History Colorado's great [education resources online](#). History Colorado also has [8 other great museums](#) statewide!

*I'm tweeting! Follow me:
@BethCSL*

Young Children and Favorite Colors

Why are favorite colors so important to young children? Find out in [this article](#).

Humans in Space Youth Art Competition

The international [2012 Humans in Space Youth Art Competition](#) invites students ages 10–18 to express their ideas about the future of human space exploration through visual, literary, musical or digital art. Winning art will be showcased at displays and multimedia performances worldwide from 2013 to 2014, as well as in an online gallery. Submissions must be received by Oct. 21, 2012.

ALSC Conference—Save the Dates!

Mark your calendars for September 20–22, 2012! That's when ALSC (Association for Library Service to Children) cruises into Indianapolis for the [2012 ALSC National Institute](#). This 2 1/2

day workshop, devoted to children's and youth library services, offers a small, intimate setting for participating in programming and getting to know colleagues. With authors like Gary Paulson, Denise Fleming, and Kevin Henkes, you won't want to miss it!

Upcoming Grant Opportunities

Dollar General Youth Literacy Grants

Deadline: May 16, 2012

Dollar General Literacy Foundation Youth Literacy Grants provide funding to schools, public libraries, and nonprofit organizations to help students who are below grade level or experiencing difficulty reading. Grant funding supports programs, technology, books and materials to support literacy initiatives. For more info visit the [Dollar General website](#).

IMLS Learning Labs in Libraries and Museums

Deadline: June 15, 2012

Learning Labs in Libraries and Museums will support the planning and designing of up to 30 Learning Labs in libraries and museums throughout the country. The Labs are intended to engage middle- and high-school youth in mentor-led, interest-based, youth-centered, collaborative learning using digital and traditional media. For more info and application guidelines visit the [IMLS website](#).

Lois Lenski Covey Foundation Grant

Deadline: June 15, 2012

The Lois Lenski Covey Foundation, Inc. annually awards grants for purchasing books for children in preschool through grade 8. The Foundation provides grants to libraries or organizations that serve economically or socially at-risk children, have limited book budgets, and demonstrate real need. Grants for 12 will range from \$500 to \$3000 and are specifically for book purchases. For more information visit the [LLCF website](#).

CO Libraries in the Press

InfoZone Reopens in Pueblo

Robert Hoag Rawlings Public Library in Pueblo reopened its InfoZone News Museum after its expansion. It features vintage newspaper equipment, a history of newspapers and a place to host meetings, art exhibits and show films. There are fun, education interactive activities for kids (and adults!). [Read the article.](#)

Flash Reading Mob in Ft. Collins!

300 people came to a flash reading mob on April 12 at the Old Town Square in Ft. Collins to celebrate and promote reading. The first-time event was held in conjunction with Drop Everything and Read Day. [Learn more here.](#)

JeffCo Public Library Circulates Culture Passes

JeffCo Library cardholders can check out a 'Culture Pass' for free admission to places such as the Denver Firefighters Museum, Dinosaur Ridge, Golden History Museums, Hudson Gardens & Event Center and several other local attractions. [Learn more here.](#)

Other CO libraries do this as well—let me know if your library circulates passes to museums or other cultural institutions in your area!

Douglas County Library Battle of the Books and Page to Stage Programs

Douglas County Library offers a Battle of the Books competition to encourage kids of all reading abilities to read and to build their confidence. Page to Stage is a program in which actors bring children's books to life. [Read the article.](#)

Thrive by Five continued

the brain is already starting to lose the ability to recognize different sounds found in other languages. Although the windows for language learning and other skills do not close, brain circuits become increasingly difficult to change over time. Thus it's easier and more effective to influence a baby's developing brain architecture than to rewire brain circuitry later.

Brain development is influenced heavily by children's environment. Young children naturally reach out for interaction through babbling, facial expressions, and gestures. If no adult responds—or if the responses are unreliable or inappropriate—the brain does not form as expected, which can lead to problems in learning and behavior.

Supportive relationships and positive learning experiences begin at home, but those provided through a range of services, like libraries, can be effective too. Babies' brains require stable, caring, interactive relationships with adults, and any way or place they can be provided will benefit healthy brain development.

Putting the Research into Practice

These research findings inform storytimes and other library programs for 0–5 year olds on providing more effective programs.

- Repetition. Children don't just like repetition, they *need* it to learn. Re-read books many times in storytimes, and have an overall storytime routine, such as using the same opening and closing each time.
- Offer programs for babies. It's essential to start instilling language skills as early as

Thrive by Five continued

possible—right after birth is best. If possible, offer a lapsit program to babies and their parents. Or, encourage parents to bring their babies to your storytimes and to read to them at home beginning at birth.

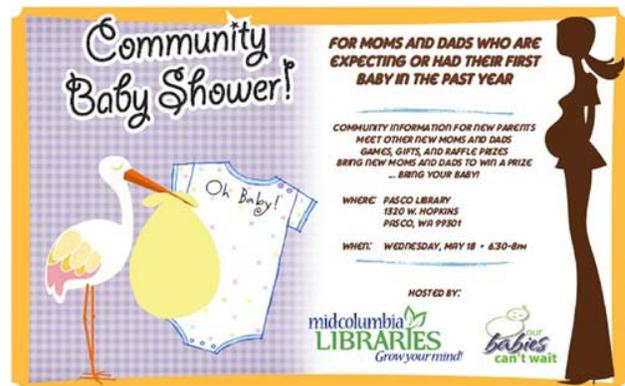
- Interact with young children. Take time to talk with young children in the library and during storytimes. This is especially important to establish early brain architecture.
- Instill a love of reading in young children. Make reading fun. Associating reading with happy emotions will help young kids develop a lifelong love of reading.
- Inform parents. Use the Every Child Ready to Read 2nd edition program (ECRR 2) to inform parents of the best ways to raise their children in a language and literacy rich environment, and the reasons that's so essential.
- Talk, read, sing, play, and write with young children. Use these 5 effective activities explained in ECRR 2, based on research on how children learn best, in your library programs.
- Use dialogic reading. In dialogic reading, you engage young children in conversation while reading *with* them, instead of only reading *to* them. Ask children what they think will happen next in the story, expand on what children say, ask them open-ended questions about how the story relates to their own experiences, etc.

1-Year-Old Plays a Magazine Like an iPad

Check out [this video](#) of a 1-year-old struggling to make a magazine work like an iPad.

Hold a Baby Shower...at Your Library!

A presentation at the Public Library Association Conference in March featured an innovative program to attract new parents to the library and inform them of the importance of instilling early literacy skills in their children. The Mid-Columbia Libraries in eastern Washington State offer community baby showers to expecting parents.



The showers, offered twice a year, feature traditional baby shower games and crafts, plus info on the library and early literacy. The library also invites other community organizations that serve new parents to have booths to further inform parents of available services.

Fingerplay Fun

(Thanks to Rick Samuelson, youth services librarian at the Washington County Cooperative Library Services in Oregon, for sharing these!)

Fingerplays and rhymes are wonderful literacy builders! They encourage conversations, beg to be sung and are built around a love of play. Learn more and enjoy these videos of Washington County librarians demonstrating some of their [favorite rhymes in English](#) and [Spanish](#).

